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THE EDUCATION OF A PATRIOT

NOT long since I stood beside the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier under the Arch of Triumph in Paris and read this simple but sublime inscription, "Here lies a soldier of France who died for his country." I was thrilled to the core of my being at the thought of the great sacrifice made by this patriot. But even as I looked upon the grave of the soldier who had died for his country the thought came to me how much greater it is to live for one's country. To die is easy, a brief struggle, a momentary pain, and then as Hamlet says, "to sleep and by a sleep to say we end the heartache and the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to." But to live is difficult; it means a continuous struggle, a battle against the forces of nature as well as against the Pandora box of evils that afflict mankind; it means the bearing of burdens and of sorrows, even though often lightened and sweetened by that hope which springs eternal in the human breast. To die for one's country is a symbol of patriotism, but to live for one's country is the very essence of patriotism.

The patriot is one who loves his country and with zeal upholds its authority and supports its interests. Patriotism is synonymous with "good citizenship." It is an acquired characteristic that reaches its full fruition through a course of training, which runs the gamut from admiration for heroic deeds, through pride in the achievements of individuals and of communities, love for native land, understanding of national ideals, and the desire to emulate national heroes and to constructively participate in

neighborhood and national contemporary affairs.

During this month and next thousands of boys and girls in each of our 48 states, the flower of our youth, will receive diplomas of graduation from our high schools.

A recent study of the education of 8,891 parents of pupils enrolled in high schools in various parts of the United States, reported by Judd in *Recent Social Trends*, reveals the fact that approximately half of these parents themselves had no more than an elementary school education and only twenty-eight per cent of these parents were high school graduates.

A comparison of the course of study pursued by these high school graduates with the course of study offered by the colleges in the early days of our country further reveals the fact that graduation from a class A senior high school at the present time is almost equivalent to graduation from a college at the time George Washington was inaugurated as our first president. The amount of work required is nearly if not quite equal in its intensity and greatly superior in its range and amount of material. The early requirement for the A. B. degree at Harvard was English, Latin, Greek, Mathematics, History, Moral Philosophy, Theology, and some science. The modern high school offers all of these except Theology and perhaps Greek, and in addition a wealth of modern natural, social, and political science, much of which was unknown or undeveloped when Harvard was founded.

These high school graduates, taken as a whole, are better educated and better trained, and better prepared to enter into the activities of adult life than were their parents before them or their colonial forefathers who were graduated from college.

This education has been made possible by the sacrifices of parents and the financial

This talk was made over the NBC network on May 27, 1934, as one of a series sponsored by the National Education Association under the general title, "Our American Schools."

aid and cooperation of the states and of the local communities. It has included the essentials of the education of a patriot, or a good citizen. They have been taught that the characteristics of a good citizen, a patriot, are three in number:

First, the good citizen or patriot is a self-supporting individual—he is not a drag upon society, he carries his own load, he hoes his own row, he paddles his own canoe—through employment in production, that is, in making the products of nature fit the needs of men; or through employment that eventually affects production he provides for himself and for those dependent upon him the basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter. The miner, the farmer, the lumberman, the manufacturer, the professional man, the artist, and the artisan, those engaged in personal service, trade and transportation, are all typical examples. Sufficient compensation to carry one's load is necessary, but the love of one's work rather than his desire for money should be the dominant motive in his occupation. Pride in one's craftsmanship and artistry develops character and in the long run brings greater financial reward. In our haste to do things in America, our high-pressure methods of production, we have often failed to reap the more enduring rewards that come with the verdict "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Second, the good citizen or patriot is an intelligent, active participant in human affairs. He takes an active interest in his government, local, state, and national, he studies the policies and procedures proposed, he investigates the character and fitness of those who offer themselves for office. He votes in every election, and supports those measures he believes to be for the interest of the community as a whole rather than those which promise most to himself and his associates. He votes for those candidates whose character and ability indicate that the offices will be honestly and efficiently administered. He fights crook-

edness in high as well as low places, bribery, graft, corruption, and inefficiency. He observes the law, and insofar as it is possible, he sees that others do likewise. He recognizes the rights of others and interferes as little as possible with their efforts. He is neither snobbish nor intolerant; he realizes that in a democracy all men are equal before the law and that each citizen like himself is entitled to have and express his own views. He cooperates in all community activities and is willing to give of his time and abilities to serve on the jury, the town council, the school board, the county board of supervisors, or in other non-remunerative capacity in which he can advance the interests of his fellowman. He believes in the rule of the majority and cheerfully submits to that rule. He realizes that the payment of taxes is a part of his obligation since through taxes he has received his own education, and it is equally his duty to provide the same privilege and opportunity for the oncoming generation, and that it is likewise his duty to pay his proportionate share of the cost of the other benefits provided for him by his government. He agrees with Abraham Lincoln that "Gold is good in its place; but living, brave, and patriotic men are better than gold."

Third, the good citizen has an intelligent appreciation of the intellectual and aesthetic interests of cultivated men. He establishes and endeavors to reach high ideals of character, morals, and religion. He enjoys language and literature, the subtleties of philosophy, and the products of the fine arts—and insofar as his abilities permit contributes to their production and preservation. He gives his aid and support to all the forces working for the advancement of mankind.

In brief, then, the good citizen or patriot provides for his own upkeep, does not interfere with the work or development of others, and makes a positive contribution to the welfare and progress of humanity. He follows the divine example of "the Son

of man who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

One of the first duties of the high school graduate if he is to meet the responsibilities and fulfill the obligation which his education as a patriot imposes is to select, if he has not already done so, an occupation or career, his life's work. This will require his most thoughtful consideration and the advice of his parents, his teachers, and leaders in the field of work selected. It will necessitate two very careful analyses: first, an analysis of the job or career to determine the type of qualifications needed to succeed and the possibilities success offers in that field of work; and second, an analysis of himself to ascertain if he has the abilities, the traits, and characteristics essential to succeed in the chosen field. The answers to the questions raised in those analyses will determine whether or not the high school graduate should go on to college, apprentice himself in the shop, or enter business.

Lord Bacon says, "To spend too much time in studies is Sloth; To use them too much for Ornament is Affectation; To make Judgment wholly by their Rules is the Humour of a Scholler. They perfect Nature, and are perfected by Experience: For Naturall Abilities, are like Naturall Plants, that need proyning by Study; And Studies themselves, doe give forth Directions, too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience."

In order to succeed in any chosen career one must possess natural ability which must be improved by study and tested, modified, and refined by experience. Many misfits in life, square pegs in round holes, are due to the fact that no efforts were made to make essential adaptations and to follow the natural and logical order indicated by Lord Bacon.

Having determined his career the student must give the necessary time and effort to study. A distinguished scholar when asked

what he thought of higher education replied: "If I were twenty, and had but ten years to live, I would spend the first nine years accumulating knowledge and getting ready for the tenth."

Hillis reminds us that "after thousands of years man is still ignorant whether it is best for him to eat flesh or confine himself only to fruit; whether the juice of the grape is helpful or harmful; whether the finest culture comes from confining one's study to a single language, as did Socrates and Shakespeare, or through learning many languages, as did Cicero and Milton; whether a monarchy or democracy is better suited for securing the people's happiness and prosperity; whether the love of God in front is a motive sufficient to pull a man heavenward, or whether fear and fire kindled in the rear will not lend greater swiftness to his footsteps. It is wonderful how many problems yet remain to be solved."

The high school graduate of 1934 will find abundant opportunities for the exercise of all his talents, provided he will make the necessary adjustments and the required preparation in college, factory, shop, or counting house for the full development of his abilities. In the present chaotic state of industrial, economic, political, and social affairs he will find it necessary to exercise all of his patriotic virtues to prevent the total collapse of a civilization dominated by greed and self-interest under a bankrupt leadership which seems to be lost in the fog of its own mediocrity.

The education of a patriot teaches him to keep physically fit. Good health is largely in the control of the individual. Fresh air, exercise, cleanliness, proper food, freedom from bad habits, and plenty of sleep are a few of the fundamentals of health which most people can secure for themselves. It is not patriotism or good citizenship to make oneself a burden upon the community through avoidable illness. A sound mind in a sound body is an ancient proverb. Health does not insure us against

making mistakes in judgment, but we are more likely to make errors when we are weak or in pain. Omitting from consideration the suffering, pain, and distress, the money loss alone from ill health in the United States is estimated a billion, five hundred million dollars annually, a drain upon our resources that we should endeavor to eliminate.

The education of a patriot also teaches him to maintain a cheerful spirit and an optimistic outlook upon life and its problems. The scriptures tell us that as a man thinketh in his heart so is he. And Milton says, "The mind is in its own place and can make a heaven of hell or a hell of heaven." If this be true, then the obligation rests upon us to so order our minds that we shall contribute to man's happiness as well as his progress.

That our country has passed through four years of the worst economic depression in history without a violent revolution is primarily due to the fact that for several decades the citizens of our country have in our public schools been given the fundamentals of the education of a patriot. The general, all-round, comprehensive training given in the elementary and secondary schools of this nation should be and in most cases is the best possible education to create a nation of patriots.

Our democratic system of government cannot long endure unless we see to it that at no matter what cost each child is given this education in patriotism. False economy here will undermine the foundation on which our national government is built and wreck our whole social system. A better system may emerge from the ruin, but the risk is too great for sensible men to take. I am sure Wilbur Nesbit had this in mind when he wrote:

What makes a nation? Is it ships or states or
flags or guns?
Or is it that great common heart which beats in
all our sons—
That deeper faith, that truer faith, the trust in
one for all

Which sets the goal for every soul that hears
his country's call?

This makes a nation great and strong and certain
to endure,
This subtle inner voice that thrills a man and
makes him sure;
Which makes him know there is no north or
south or east or west,
But that his land must ever stand the bravest and
the best.

JOSEPH H. SAUNDERS

FACILITATING THE STUDY OF GERMAN FOR CHEMISTS

This is a short account of the work being done at the Virginia Military Institute in the Department of German with the cooperation of the Department of Chemistry in facilitating the study of German for those students taking chemistry. The features of the plan are: (1) practical elimination of literary German and the beginning of reading in science as soon as possible, (2) close cooperation throughout the course with the Department of Chemistry, (3) selection of material (after the first stages) which will be of interest and which will provide either a review of what has already been studied in chemistry, or additional instructional matter in this subject, or material which will be of permanent value in the library, and (4) simulation in the class room of the conditions under which German will be used in research or in industry.

IN SOME colleges, more fortunate in this respect than ours, students of chemistry are segregated from other science students for the study of German. At V. M. I., however, we find in the sophomore class of German every year students who intend following pre-medicine, electrical engineering, civil engineering, and chemistry. At this stage of the game, of course, they have all completed one full year of grammar and have finished the reading of from 300 to 400 pages of elementary German. The method of handling such a group must, therefore, differ somewhat from that employed where all members of the class are taking exactly the same course.

The question then arises as to how a mixed group of this kind is to be handled. The procedure in most departments, I believe, is to start the class, irrespective of the fields represented, in a German science